



July 20, 2019

Dear President Brown,

It has come to our attention that on Wednesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> at a Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) meeting, one of your employees, Sherika Carter informed members of the NAACP and several community leaders that WSLC was planning a July 27<sup>th</sup> press conference to announce a separate Referendum 88 campaign organization to compete with the current I-1000 campaign, led by the One Washington Equality Campaign Committee (OWEC). If this is not true, please disregard this letter. But if it is true, please keep reading.

For nearly a year, the undersigned Pastors and Ministers have been part of a broad statewide coalition of churches and civil rights organizations representing nearly 2 million Washington voters who have enthusiastically endorsed I-1000. There are several reasons why we have endorsed I-1000:

First, I-1000 assembled a Blue-Ribbon Legal Team which thoroughly researched, drafted and published the state's first bi-partisan legislative policy on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. The I-1000 Legal Team has also successfully litigated five (5) consecutive lawsuits filed by Tim Eyman's lawyers against I-1000. I-1000 has won every Eyman challenge from Superior Court all the way to the Washington State Supreme Court.

Then our churches helped I-1000 amass 395,938 signatures to earn the Secretary of State's full certification and advancement to the Washington State Legislature for a vote. According to the Secretary of State's office, I-1000 achieved more signatures than any other Initiative to the legislature in Washington state history.

Then against unprecedented odds, I-1000 garnered the bipartisan support of Washington's Democratic and Republican current and former Governors and lobbied the Washington State Legislature which on April 28<sup>th</sup>, passed I-1000 into law 56-42 in the House and 26-22 in the Senate.

Financially, we have helped I-1000 raise over \$1.7 million in combined cash, credit, and in-kind contributions to finance the entire I-1000 campaign;

The I-1000 campaign has been successful at every phase and has built the foundation to execute a successful statewide ballot campaign.

Given I-1000's success, it is extremely disappointing to learn that the WSLC is organizing an effort to undermine I-1000's progress which can only result in dividing the political, financial and volunteer human resources which must be unified as we head into what promises to be a very close election.

Unfortunately, the WSLC's historic lack of concrete support for Affirmative Action and other major Civil Rights issues does not engender a high level of trust in the African-American community for most of Washington's local labor unions.

Recognizing you were only recently elected WSLC President this year, we're not blaming you for the African American community's mistrust of organized labor. However, we believe you should be aware of WSLC'S past and present record on Affirmative Action and Civil Rights which has bred this mistrust:

1. In 1998, 54% of Washington state's labor union members voted for Tim Eyman's Initiative 200 which killed Affirmative Action. Source: Seattle Times, November 4, 1998.
2. In 2017, WSLC endorsed Initiative 940 (De-Escalate) on paper, but contributed zero dollars to the I-940 campaign; Source: Washington State Public Disclosure Commission.
3. In May, 2018, WSLC donated \$125,000 to Initiative 1631 which WSLC twice voted not to endorse and only \$2,000 to I-1000 which WSLC unanimously endorsed... twice. Source: WSLC COPE Convention (May, 2018)
4. In July, 2018, WSLC affiliates AFSCME Council 28, AFT Washington, Carpenters, Washington State Building Trades, SEIU 775, IBEW 77, Teamsters, endorsed and funded Republican State Senator Mark Miloscia, a fierce outspoken opponent of Affirmative Action and backer of Tim Eyman's Car Tab Initiatives and Referendum 88. Source: [www.MARKMILOSCIA.com](http://www.MARKMILOSCIA.com) & Public Disclosure Commission (PDC)
5. In September 2018, MLK Labor Council membership approved a \$5,000 donation to I-1000's signature gathering campaign. MLK Labor Executive Board later rescinded the funds without notifying the I-1000 campaign. Although MLK Labor ultimately paid the \$5,000 donation months later after I-1000 had to borrow funds to submit their signatures, the Board member who opposed I-1000's \$5,000 donation was subsequently elected President of MLK Labor. Source: MLK Labor Minutes (October, 2018 & January, 2019)
6. MLK Labor Council prohibits Constituency Groups of Color from equal endorsement voting rights on Executive Board. Source: MLK Labor Council By-Laws
7. In January, 2019, WSLC excluded I-1000 in their 2019 "Shared Prosperity Agenda" which listed WSLC's top 22 legislative priorities for the 2019 session. Source: WSLC's published 2019 Shared Prosperity Agenda (Attached: January 30, 2019)
8. In March, 2019, WSLC conducted a statewide poll on I-1000, omitting and distorting key facts about I-1000: Example: WSLC omitted the fact that Republican Governor Dan Evans and Democrat Christine Gregoire endorsed I-1000 or that I-1000 helps protect seniors or people with disabilities. Source: Lake Research Partners WSLC I-1000 Statewide Poll (March 14-19, 2019)

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9. On April 18, 2019, neither WSLC nor any other labor union representative publicly testified in favor of I-1000 at the Joint House-Senate Legislative Hearing on I-1000.

As the new WSLC President, you have the unique opportunity to turn a new page rather than perpetuate the WSLC's dismal record on Affirmative Action and Civil Rights. Therefore, we respectfully request that you postpone the July 27<sup>th</sup> press conference until after WSLC leaders first meet with representatives of the Washington State Black Clergy and Washington State Civil Rights Coalition to discuss methods by which we can work together on what is one of the most important, if not the most important issue to face Washington state in our lifetime.

As Jesus taught us in the Gospel of Mark 3:25, **"If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."** These words were true in Biblical times. They are still true today.

Our African American church congregations have been some of I-200's worst victims. African American's 7% state unemployment rate is more than double the state's 3% unemployment rate. African-Americans are only 4% of the state population, but 18% of the state's prison population. We have waited over 20 years for this moment. We have no intentions of letting the WSLC or any other organization squander this once in a generation opportunity to reclaim our Affirmative Action rights.

If we meet and find common ground, there is the high possibility of a joint press conference. However, if the WSLC is unresponsive or unwilling to meet before July 27<sup>th</sup>, we will have no choice but to urge our congregations to not support what will clearly be viewed as yet another attempt by local organized labor to kill affirmative action by dividing the very movement it has deceptively endorsed on paper.

Please reply today with your earliest meeting date and time to Mr. Hayward Evans, Chair, Washington State Civil Rights Coalition at either (206) 778-6357 or [haywardmlkcc@gmail.com](mailto:haywardmlkcc@gmail.com).

Respectfully,

Hayward M. Evans, Representative  
WA. State Civil Rights Coalition  
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cc: Richard L. Trumka, President AFL-CIO  
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**WASHINGTON STATE CIVIL RIGHTS COALITION**

Eddie Rye, Jr

**WASHINGTON STATE CIVIL RIGHTS COALITION (CRC)**

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